

were spied on by others. And so it was a paranoid area.

He said neighbors for years had quit speaking to neighbors out of this kind of fear and paranoia, but it was not just paranoia. There were really people out to get them in order to move up. I know having spent a summer in the Soviet Union, it was the Soviet Union when I was there back in 1973. I had asked one of the Soviet students when somebody rushed out of a room, I said, Where is that person going? He said, She is going to tell on me because in your country maybe money helps advance you, but in my country the only way you get anywhere is to step on other people on the way up.

That is the way it was in Iraq. You stepped on other people to move forward, and it was a terrible time to live in. And this man, as tears welled up, he said on the day of the election neighbors that had not spoken for years, they came out, they held hands and they walked to the polls together to vote.

Now, anybody that would seek to demean the great things that have already been accomplished that has put the self-government within these people's grasp so that the seed of democracy might grow and flourish and develop and spread to the surrounding countries, is just intolerable. There are great things that have occurred. There are people who have laid down their lives so this could happen. There are people who have laid down their lives in service to this country. There are people that have been wounded and hurt. And as the speaker said, we have visited those people, we have been with families at funerals and it is heart-breaking. But there is a seed of freedom and democracy and the potential for self-government that has been granted.

Now, comparisons continue even tonight to be made by a colleague across the aisle who wants to compare this to Saigon. This is not Vietnam. Iraq is not Vietnam. It is completely different. That advisory action where we had advisors in Vietnam that was escalated by President Kennedy and then escalated further into a full war even though it was called police action by President Johnson, and then was ultimately, even though he is no hero of mine, President Nixon did get us out of Vietnam. I am not pleased with the way it was done, but people were made to die for nothing. But they did not die for nothing. They died for the ideal that man was created by their creator with God-given rights. They did not die for some wishy-washy government in Washington.

Now, this election in Iraq and what is going on over there is historic. It is awesome. It is being done by valiant people to demean what has been done and the lives that have been sacrificed, even by Iraqis, is simply inappropriate, excessive political exuberance at the cost of truth, honesty and dignity.

Now, the naysaying brutality that is being heard verbalizing this idea that

we should have our head in the sand is simply inappropriate. I was grilled by some Al-Jazeera reporters. They said, You must have been upset by the January elections. Your candidate was not elected. I said, We were not here about a president. We were here about a process, that you would govern yourself, and you would select your own president.

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It is not about a president. It is about a process. And they began to see.

And some of the Sunnis had said, you know, we were told by our leaders not to vote; that, for one thing, the vote would not come off because of all the violence, and we saw that did not happen. People did vote anyway. We were also told it would be a fraud, that the Americans would use this as a way to install their puppet government. But that did not happen. The guy that was most friendly to the United States got third place. We saw, wow, this was a real election and we missed it. We are not going to let that happen again.

And even though it may not have been a majority of the Sunnis, the Sunnis bravely came out and voted. And they voted knowing even still their religious leaders were speaking against it.

I was able to relate to the Al-Jazeera and some of the Iraqis present with a story that can be depicted in the beautiful huge portrait outside this very floor of the Constitutional Convention with Chairman Washington standing there. The story that was told was of Benjamin Franklin sitting there, as depicted in his chair at the Constitutional Convention after they had come up with a document, finally. And he said, you know, I have been looking at that half of a sun engraved on the back of your chair trying to decide through the process of this convention if that was a rising sun or that was a setting sun, and now I believe it is a rising sun. And I related to the Iraqi reporters, I believe what I am seeing in this country is a rising sun.

It is an incredible day in the history of mankind that in the area where many believe the cradle of mankind existed, where mankind started, for the first time in thousands of years that area is about to govern themselves. We have done a great thing.

There are things that I have heard right here on this floor that I might disagree with our President over, but I thank God that he has stayed the course. Because if the seed of freedom and self-government is allowed to grow and flourish in Iraq, it will spread with other seeds. We are already seeing that, as the gentleman from Connecticut pointed out, in surrounding areas, if we stay the course long enough to let them take over, let them govern. We have trained their policemen. We are training their soldiers, and they are nearly ready to take over. What a glorious day that will be for them. They are not going to agree with

us on many things, but they will be a free people and they will understand that freedom.

I thank God that in the late 1700s, 1776 to 1789, that the naysayers that said how stupid this was, that those in France who were the naysayers to this gentleman, Lafayette, who really saw something in the potential for these colonies in America, I thank God, the very God we see inscribed above the Speaker's chair, where it says "In God we trust," I thank that God that the naysayers did not prevail; that the naysayers, those with their heads in the sand, the negative people, that they did not prevail. Thank goodness that freedom won out.

And I am praying to that same God that it prevails in the Middle East, despite the naysaying of those who would be heard even in this body itself. And, Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to have addressed this issue this evening.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BECERRA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PAUL) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SHUSTER, for 5 minutes, October 19.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, October 19.

Mr. MARCHANT, for 5 minutes, October 19.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DENT, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. Trandahl, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3765. An act to extend through March 31, 2006, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities and to expedite the processing of permits.